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10SUPOTH521

the **CHAOS of CREATIVITY**

SHAKING UP YOUR THINKING ABOUT DIRECT CAN BOOST RESULTS

VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 4 | AUGUST 2010

Touching the Consumer

A moment for the sensitive side of mail marketing. Oh sure, we talk tough about the robust physicality of mail, the power of its reach and the preciseness of its targeting. And all of that's true, of course. But mail has another gear. It can play to the intangible as well. It can evoke some powerful feelings and stir some deep loyalties.

And it likes to be held. It's this touchability that helps mail add deeper meaning to campaigns, of course. It's the element that allows mail to break free of the two-dimensional constraints of other platforms and reach consumers in ways other channels can't. And business campaigns aren't the only ones seizing on mail's particular advantages. Political campaigns also are discovering new and compelling ways to use mail to drive their messages and promote loyalty among supporters. As this issue shows, even President Barack Obama has relied on mail (p. 14) to get out his message and rally backers. Meanwhile, a plethora of political



marketers at state and local levels are offering examples of how smaller campaigns also are using mail to make a difference.

Of course, marketers still employ mail to appeal to lighter-hearted passions. Structural Graphics, a hotbed of direct mail creativity, is a great example of a marketing company that is showcasing the channel's whimsical side (p. 24). In our story, the folks behind SG reveal how a love of children's books inspired the company's humorous, imaginative slants on direct mail. They also explain how and why their work helps clients meet some vital business objectives.

We also feature great tips from Kodak marketing executive Pat McGrew (p. 30), who outlines a handful of important — but surprisingly overlooked — areas where marketers can maximize their mailings. As McGrew explains, sometimes all it takes are a few tweaks to restore your marketing's appeal.

Other times, though, you have to recalibrate more extensively to get the most out of your mail marketing. That's a lesson that online retailer Blinds.com (p. 20) has learned well, as our case study on the company shows. After a few integrated efforts saw only mild results, Blinds.com took a more in-depth look at its database and adjusted its targeting. The company also sniffed out new revenue streams among existing customers in the process.

We've got other great stories, too. This includes our look at Ford Motor Co.'s deeper dive into Spanish-language marketing and a column explaining why you need mail in your media mix — right now.

As always, we've got plenty of stats and tips, too, all of it designed to help you get a better feel for your targets.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ROY RITCHIE

JILL FROMER, ISTOCK EXCLUSIVE, GETTY IMAGES

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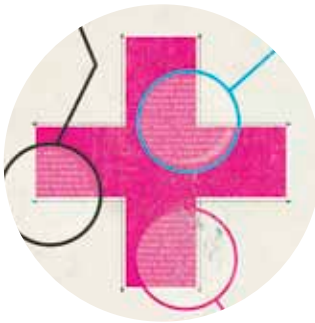


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Kodak communications guru Pat McGrew suggests you adjust five key areas of your marketing plan.

USE THIS KEY

Our handy little guide to help you quickly find the stories in this issue that are relevant to your business.

S SMALL BUSINESS Less than 100 employees. The parking lot's full — and half the cars are yours.

M MEDIUM BUSINESS Between 101 and 499 employees. You've finally managed to score yourself one of those fancy numbered spots.

L LARGE BUSINESS More than 500 employees. You've got covered parking near the front door — but you're rarely there to use it.

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COVER PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER WITH 10% POSTCONSUMER WASTE. BODY PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER WITH 10% POSTCONSUMER WASTE.

ON THE COVER: PHOTOGRAPHY BY NOEL SPIRANDELLI
DELIVER LOGO: COHERENT IMAGES

DELIVERABLES

A BRIEF LOOK AT SOME BIG ISSUES
IN DIRECT MAIL



YOU SHOULD KNOW

MAIL HAS DIRECTLY INFLUENCED MORE CONSUMERS TO PURCHASE THAN ANY OTHER CHANNEL. SEVENTY-SIX PERCENT OF CONSUMERS HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY INFLUENCED TO PURCHASE THROUGH DIRECT MAIL.

POSTINGS

TARGET YOUR MESSAGE

Talk, Don't Translate

Ford mailer upends conventional Hispanic marketing

The biggest mistake marketers make when communicating to Hispanics is literally translating an English message to Spanish, according to David Rodriguez of Ford Motor Company's Multicultural Marketing team.

To avoid this pitfall, Ford recently developed a direct mail campaign meant to test the limits of bilingual and culturally relevant marketing. The dual-language version had the same format as the English mailer, but the difference was that the dual-language version had culturally relevant clues.

"Our strategy was to make this piece culturally relevant to our target," Rodriguez says. "We accomplished this by complementing the vehicle imagery with pictures of Latinos from various walks of life that the Hispanic target could relate to."

He adds that copy was formatted to provide "a clean read for consumers, while overcoming the challenge of fitting two languages into the same real estate." A vibrant and inviting metallic blue and gray

"This program showed us it's important how you deliver a message to the Hispanic target – a message they can relate to and that they know was made with them in mind; not just a mere translation or adaptation of the message."

— David Rodriguez, Ford Motor Company

was used instead of the solid black background used in the English piece. According to Rodriguez, the culturally relevant bilingual creative that targeted Hispanic Ford owners almost doubled the incremental sales lift of the English-only creative.

"This program showed us it's important how you deliver a message to the Hispanic target — a message they can relate to and that they know was made with them in mind, not just a mere translation or adaptation of the message," Rodriguez says. "Do that, and you should get a higher response."

What Catalogers Can Learn from Digital Matchbacks

Matchbacks — the comparison of isolated website customers with an original catalog mailing list — are increasingly being seen as a source of valuable marketing data. Marketing databases built on matches are being sifted for information to facilitate segmentation, measure revenue and judge list performance, among other purposes.

BY THE NUMBERS

three-fourths

Portion of marketers who said their company is using or planning to use offline data when making decisions about marketing offers.

7 in 10

Number of marketers who said they were using or planning to use offline data to make direct mail offers.

35 percent

Portion of marketers who say their direct marketing and online marketing are separated within their companies.

Source: "The State of Marketing 2010," Unica Corp.

INTEGRATE CHANNELS

Mail Helps Brew a Sales Record

Steaz, an organic tea brand, doubled its previous monthly sales record with a promotion that blended mail, social media and the Web. Product samples and digital coupons delivered \$1 million in additional sales during the three-month campaign and played a role in a major supermarket chain's decision to carry the brand, according to reports.




MAILINGS INCREASE

CHARGE! Credit Card Offer Mailings on the Rise

Want a better credit card offer? Look inside the mailbox. After pulling back on offers during the recession, credit card marketers opened up their wallets and made significant increases in customer acquisition mailings. According to Synovate Mail Monitor, U.S. households received 481.3 million credit card offers in the first quarter of 2010, an increase of 29 percent compared to the same time a year ago. Consumers received better offers, too, reports the direct mail tracking service. Credit card issuers extended introductory purchase APRs, and annual fees fell from a mean of \$93 in 2009 to \$68 in the first quarter of 2010.



“One of the things we often hear from marketers is, ‘We like it, we like it,’ when it comes to an agency creating a new ad. They can like it, but they also have to keep in mind, Does it speak to the consumer? Does it connect with them? And does it motivate them?” – *Pepper Miller, founder, The Hunter-Miller Group Inc.*



MAIL MORE EFFECTIVE

Hailing Mail

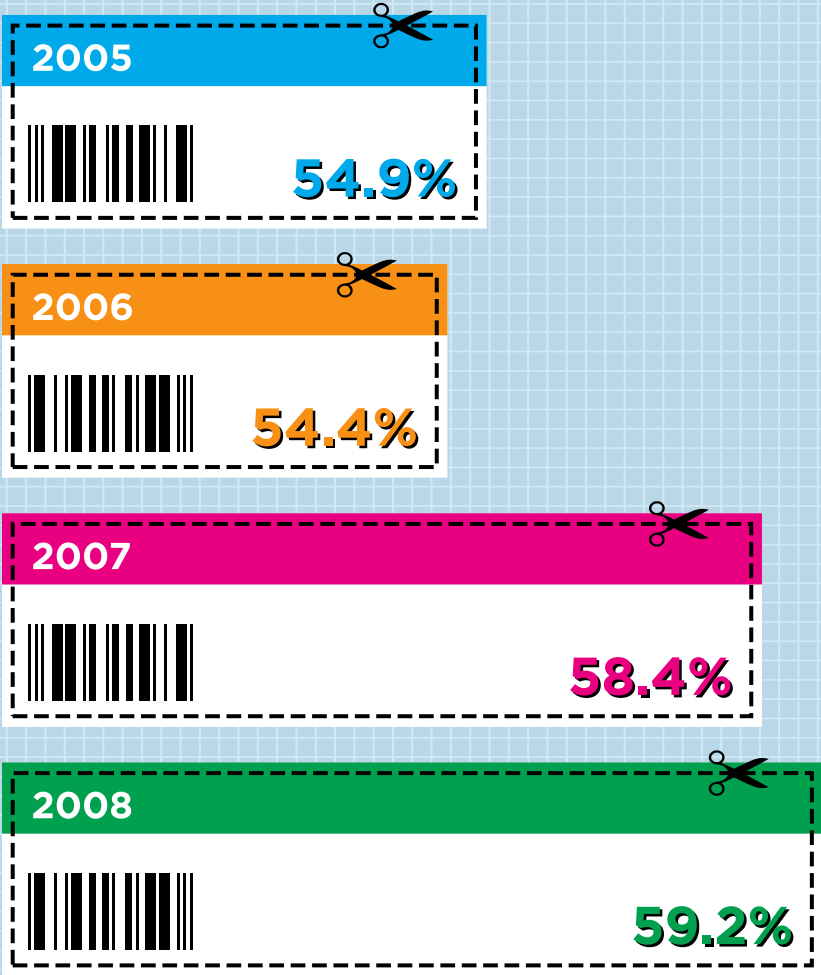
Direct mail got a shout out from leading opinion site *The Huffington Post* recently. In her editorial, marketing expert, author and public speaker Sarah O’Leary reminds marketers that e-mail’s “efficiency without effectiveness” can be wasteful. Consumers now inundated with unwanted e-mail are digitally throwing out the spam while today’s direct mail is more apt to be opened and read. According to O’Leary, “To reach your consumers in the Internet age, sometimes you have to lick a few stamps.”



INFOGRAPHIC

A FASTER CLIP

The percentage of non-food coupons distributed via direct mail, by year:



Source: CMS Trends, 2009

PORTRAIT BY GLEKTI / LEFT: FANCY, JUPITER IMAGES

MIX PRINT AND DIGITAL

Anaheim’s Got an App for That

When the City of Anaheim promoted a contest for online and mobile applications, it turned to a tried-and-true method of getting the word out: direct mail. Mailings announcing the contest and soliciting ideas for smartphone apps (for city services, programs and commercial offerings) were bundled into local utility bills sent to more than 96,000 households. Mail was supported by social media. Recipients competed for \$5,000 in cash and prizes. The contest, sponsored in part by Anaheim Public Utilities, ran last year from September to November. Ideas were submitted from 12 states and 94 cities.

REDUCE UNDELIVERABLE MAIL

Dead Letter Solution

According to a 2008 Pitney Bowes research survey, undeliverable mail can cost companies up to \$3 or more, per piece, in added processing. Businesses can help reduce undeliverable mail rates by using the United States Postal Service® Delivery Point Validation (DPV) System. The DPV System assists mailers in obtaining accurate delivery address information by identifying erroneous addresses contained in mailer address files. DPV is available through USPS® Certified DPV Licensees. For more information, visit usps.com, or contact the USPS National Customer Support Center at (800) 238-3150.

BRANDON LAUFENBERG, iSTOCK VECTORS, GETTY IMAGES

Talking Heads

Business pros share *SMART MARKETING SOLUTIONS*



Elliott Schwartz
EmptyLegMarket, PINEHURST, N.C.

The launch of EmptyLegMarket, an online clearinghouse for unsold segments on private jets, captured the industry’s attention with a unique direct mail campaign. Schwartz’s group purchased hollow mannequin legs, decorated them with small jets and the company’s URL, and mailed them to 30 strategically selected private jet operators. The legs kicked doors open. “Recipients told me they couldn’t stop laughing,” Schwartz says. Forty percent of the list registered on the site after receiving the empty legs. The mailing generated trade media publicity, too.



John Schulte
National Mail Order Association, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Schulte’s organization sets an example for mail-order marketers by using direct mail to solicit members, sending prospects a postcard with a crossword puzzle. To get the answers, recipients must visit the group’s website, where they are invited to join or sign up for a free e-newsletter. In a twist that might also inspire, the NMOA receives free postcard printing in exchange for a text-only printer ad positioned as a sponsor announcement alongside the recipient’s address.



Kristy Hemp
Experimental Aircraft Association, OSHKOSH, WIS.

In addition to changing the look and content of the Experimental Aircraft Association’s fundraising mailing this year, Hemp and her team worked to test a new affinity group list. Shifting away from past lists for individuals interested in military aviation, EAA used a list from an organization that shared its cause: World War II education and artifact preservation. The mailing generated a 361-percent response increase over the previous year’s numbers, and the number of donors from the test list was nearly equal to the number of total past donors.



Robert Smith
Champion Media Worldwide, LOVES PARK, ILL.

Entrepreneur Robert Smith hoped that sending an event invitation via a well-known international shipping brand would help his seminar stand out. Instead, the marketing effort for his two-day “Next Level” seminar in suburban Chicago fizzled. Smith quickly shifted to postcards and began working with the U.S. Postal Service.® The more cost-effective format allowed for a larger mailing of 1,600 pieces and generated a much-improved 2-percent response. “Direct mail lets you pick a niche and test your offer without spending a lot of money,” Smith says.



Are you a small business with a smart marketing solution to share? Tell us about it at delivermagazine.com/talkingheads/. We just might feature it in a future issue.

Mail Enters a New Era

Far from killing off direct mail, technology is making it stronger.

Look at recent developments, and it becomes clear we're witnessing a new age of direct mail. Long an effective marketing device, mail is now being linked with new technologies in astounding ways that improve its effectiveness and bring a new engagement. Such advancements ensure it will last several more generations, and will likely launch mail into a new era of viability.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. The explosion of digital technology was supposed to be the death knell for direct mail. The medium was expected to take what direct had done, and do it better, faster and cheaper.

Consider the irony then that far from killing it off, digital is helping usher in this new era of direct mail.

Of course direct mail and digital have always been buddies. Mail was the primary way most of us learned about the Internet. (Remember those ubiquitous disks from a major online company?)

Catalogers have always known that mail can drive additional sales and online visits, and many digital entrepreneurs have turned to the mailbox to drive people to the inbox.

The difference today is that marketers are now finding methods for combining digital technology with mail to increase the power of the message. Mail is no longer the carrier, the device you use to drive someone online. It's the beginning of a conversation that carries on once the customer logs on.

Using QR codes, personalized URLs and digital tracking techniques, such as Intelligent Mail, marketers are adding impact to a medium already known for its ability to engage an audience.

For example, Go Green Items recently used a QR code on its mailer to provide potential customers with a discount. Other marketers are combining QR codes and mail to provide augmented reality experiences that help get their message across.

Clearly, the efficiencies of mail — its laser-like ability to target customers, paired with a way to expand that message, through augmented reality or a personalized URL — is making marketers rethink their opinion of what many regarded as an "old" advertising vehicle.

It's about the convergence of traditional and digital, yes, but that's just the start. What we're witnessing is a revolution that will launch mail into the next generation and beyond.

It's another lesson in the amazing adaptability of mail. Marketers would be smart to take full advantage of this flexibility. And smart marketers do.



ILLUSTRATION BY DANTE TERZIGNI

LOCATIONS THAT ARE MADE UP OF NEARLY 50 PERCENT OR MORE SINGLES:¹

72% Washington, D.C.
50% New Mexico
49% New York
48% Hawaii
48% California

Never-married

singles represent a stronger than average market for catalog and direct mail purchases of books/music/videos, computer products, footwear, tickets, electronics and credit cards.²

WIDOWED AND DIVORCED SINGLES ARE MORE LIKELY THAN ALL ADULTS TO PURCHASE ITEMS FROM DIRECT MAIL AND CATALOGS.²

\$372

Average amount singles spent in 2009 on items from catalogs and direct mail pieces. This is about \$50 less spend than the average U.S. adult, but singles are typically buying for fewer people than the average adult.²



Fifty years ago unmarried women comprised one in every seven American adults. Today, they account for one in every four adults.¹

¹ Unmarried America 2010. ² Experian Simmons Fall 2009 National Consumer Study. ³ Factfinder.census.gov. ⁴ 2010 Bundle Report: How America Spends.



SINGLED OUT

Singles in America are a diverse group, running the gamut from young moms to elderly retirees. Although some say singles have been overlooked by marketers, the singles market, which makes up 45 percent of all Americans, is a rich segment for various business messages. "Never-married singles are a bright spot for entertainment, for example," says Keith Peterson, senior vice president of Global Product Development for Experian Marketing Services. — Vicki Powers

THE LARGEST DEMOGRAPHIC OF SINGLES IS THE 18-24 AGE BRACKET (22%) FOLLOWED BY THE 65+ AGE BRACKET (17.5%).²



34% of singles have lived at their address less than one year compared to 15% of married folks.¹



36% of single men and 30% of single women live in urban settings.³



Single men without kids spent 18% more than single women without kids in 2009.⁴

“How Critical Is a Loyalty Program to Building Your Business?”



L

STAN SKADAL

Senior Director of
Sales & Marketing, Hyatt Regency

Repeat customers are the backbone of any company. Those loyal customers always refer you to their friends and business associates. This type of customer can spread the news of your company far and wide with little to no advertising. Staying in constant touch with your loyal customers is paramount! One of the best ways is through direct mail. With this method, you give them updates on their loyalty points they have earned, while at the same time provide information on special promotional offers, discount coupons and upcoming events, as well as general updates on your company. **Using direct mail the same time each month gives your customer a consistent and constant reminder of your loyalty to them.** They look forward to it. And, most important, they respond.



M

BILL ZINKE

Chief Marketing Officer,
Tasti D-Lite LLC

Customer loyalty comes from consistently delivering a superior, differentiated product or experience. At Tasti D-Lite, we understand the power and importance of customer loyalty because our brand has grown from one market to being known worldwide as a healthier frozen treat due to a truly passionate fan base. **A program that encourages, rewards and spreads this kind of behavior to more customers can and should take a brand's customer loyalty to a new level and strengthen the foundation of the business.** Our recently launched TastiRewards loyalty program lets customers earn points toward free Tasti and was the first to allow members to automatically share their behavior with friends on social networks. We also let customers opt in to receive exclusive offers electronically and through the mail, including birthday offers.



S

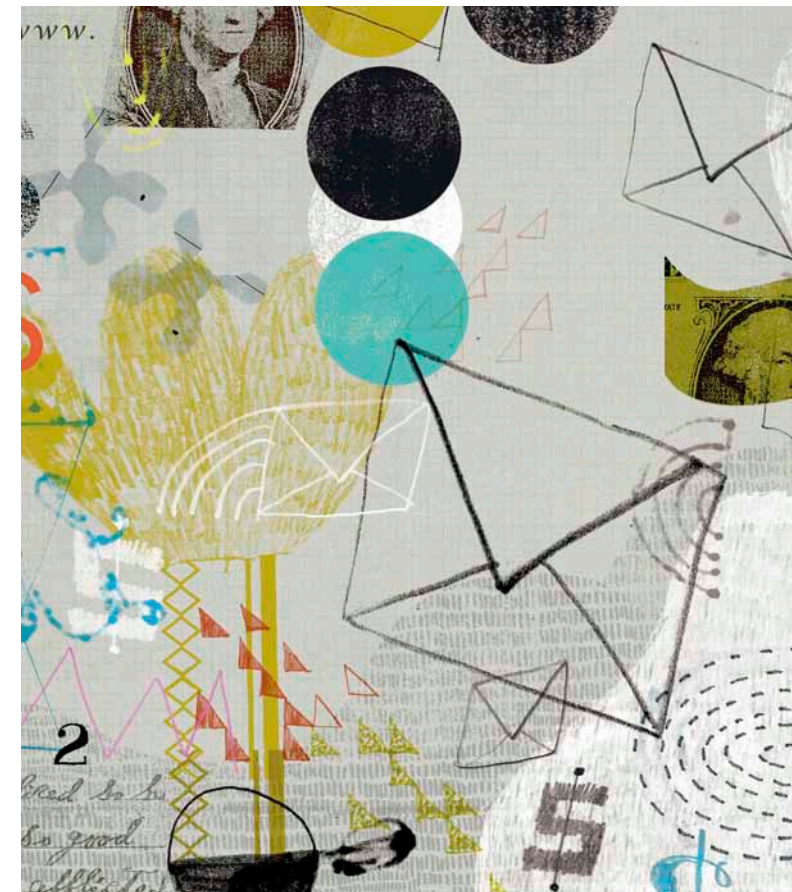
MARY ARAGON

Program Director, Camp Cook

Think about when you go to the mailbox. What is the first thing you do? You quickly thumb through all the bills and offers, and then you see it ... a handwritten envelope with your name on it. As an entrepreneur, I have tried many different things to market my cooking-class business. **One of the most successful things our company does is to thank our clients with a personal note sent in the mail.** Every single camper and participant who walks through the door of Camp Cook receives a personalized note, handwritten and signed by our staff. This is simply part of the Camp Cook experience. The feedback and repeat business we receive from this small effort is worth its weight in gold. It creates client loyalty, and our clients refer our school to their friends and family.

PORTRAITS BY GLEKIT

ILLUSTRATION BY DANTE TERZIGNI



Susan Plonkey is vice
president of Sales at the
U.S. Postal Service.®

that direct mail returns an impressive \$12.53 for every dollar invested in it.

We recently had the opportunity to witness the power of mail as part of our efforts to promote Priority Mail® Flat Rate Boxes. You may have seen our ads, which feature a mail carrier informing businesses and consumers — and in one case a family with a very eerie clown doll — that they can save time and money by using Priority Mail Flat Rate Boxes for their shipping. The campaign includes television spots, print ads, online advertising and, of course, direct mail.

It's done a great job of creating interest in the boxes and making the tagline “If it fits, it ships” part of the vernacular. More than that, though, the campaign has generated a significant increase in the use of Priority Mail Flat Rate Boxes and brought increased revenue to the U.S. Postal Service. And, while each of the channels we used had an impact on the overall return of the program, mail had the biggest. In fact, direct mail was responsible for 35 percent of all the leads the campaign generated.

That's just one more example of the influence that mail can have when it's part of an integrated marketing strategy.

I hope the economy continues to recover and marketers get more dollars with which to promote their companies. But as you make your own marketing decisions, I'd urge you to ask yourself, What about mail? Doing so may lead you to add a channel to your marketing that can help drive sales and revenue.

What About Mail?

As marketing budgets improve, now is the time to add mail to the mix.

The nation's economy continues to gain strength, and we're seeing marketing budgets start to rebound. That's good news for us all.

As you plan where to allocate these increased dollars, don't overlook direct mail. There's no other marketing channel that's as highly targeted, incredibly impactful and offers such a strong ROI.

Studies consistently show that direct mail has a significant impact on sales and revenue — whether used alone or in combination with other marketing channels.

Our own research shows 79 percent of all households read or scan the direct mail they receive. Other studies demonstrate that more than three-quarters of Internet users say direct mail influenced them to buy something online. And the Direct Marketing Association calculates



1) CRYSTAL CLARITY:
When recipients take it out of the envelope, the accordion-folded piece opens up into a cardboard-base globe with a clear plastic exterior and image card in the middle.

2) FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT:
The three-inch clear plastic "crystal ball" has a retro-kitschy beach scene depicting a carefree future with Cox Business—San Diego.

3) IT'S IN THE CARDS:
Another card attaches to the crystal ball with the message, "I'm loving the future with Cox Business."



US PATENT 7490425

A Message That's Crystal Clear

An inviting pop-up mailer helps a telecom company stay connected to B-to-B customers.

By Paula Andruss

Becca Linekin has disturbing visions of her customers tossing her B-to-B marketing materials aside as they stand over the trash can.

And it's just these kinds of anxieties that drove the marketing manager for Cox Business—San Diego to seek out an attention-grabbing, memorable direct mail piece as the final installment in a three-piece customer-retention program. "We were looking for a way to reach out to our existing customers without actually attempting to sell them anything," Linekin says. "I wanted them to stop what they're doing, say 'What's this?' and put everything else down to look at it."

To this end, Linekin teamed with her ad agency to come up with a piece that had recipients peering deep into her marketing messages. Cox Business decided on a charming, three-inch crystal ball mailer that pops open to reveal a retro-kitschy beach scene.

The piece conveys the idea that recipients will have a bright and carefree future by selecting Cox Business—San Diego, which provides telephone, Internet connectivity and video services to businesses in San Diego County. Nationwide, Cox Business provides telecommunications services to more than 250,000 commercial customers for Cox Communications, including health-care providers, K-12 and higher education, financial institutions, and federal, state and local government organizations.

The mailers — designed in partnership with Blue Horse & Trumpet Advertising in San Diego and manufactured by Connecticut-based 3D Paper Graphics — go out to businesses when they approach their first anniversary as a Cox customer. The pieces thank customers for their business and remind them how to reach the company if they have any questions or concerns.

Another card attaches to the crystal ball with the message, "I'm loving the future with Cox Business." Short copy reinforces the idea that the recipient made a smart choice in selecting Cox Business and lists contact numbers for assistance and support.

Linekin says mail was a natural choice for the campaign because it is delivered to the same location as the Cox services themselves.

The company launched the campaign in February, with the goal of

sending out thousands of mailers in the first year. Linekin says that while the program is still in its early stages, the crystal ball has received a good deal of positive attention and feedback.

"We wanted something that would be so different, interesting and visually appealing that recipients would leave it on their desks long after it came to them in the mail," she says. "And I believe that's exactly what we achieved. People love it — and as far as we can tell, nobody is throwing theirs away."

"I wanted them to stop what they're doing, say 'What's this?' and put everything else down to look at it."

— Becca Linekin, marketing manager

THE ESSENTIALS

Company: Cox Business—San Diego. **Agency:** Blue Horse & Trumpet (San Diego). **Target Audience:** Businesses approaching their one-year anniversary as a Cox customer. **Goals:** To boost customer retention, the campaign reinforces the idea that choosing Cox Business was a smart move and provides contact information should the recipient have any new needs or issues. **DM Vehicle:** Three-inch clear plastic "crystal ball" with a scene depicting a carefree future with Cox Business—San Diego (the third in a three-part direct mail campaign).

MAKING **POLITICS** MORE PERSONAL

A targeted mail campaign by President Obama illustrates the ongoing evolution of political marketing in the digital age.

BY BRUCE BRITT

STORY AT A GLANCE

Name of Organization:
Organizing for America

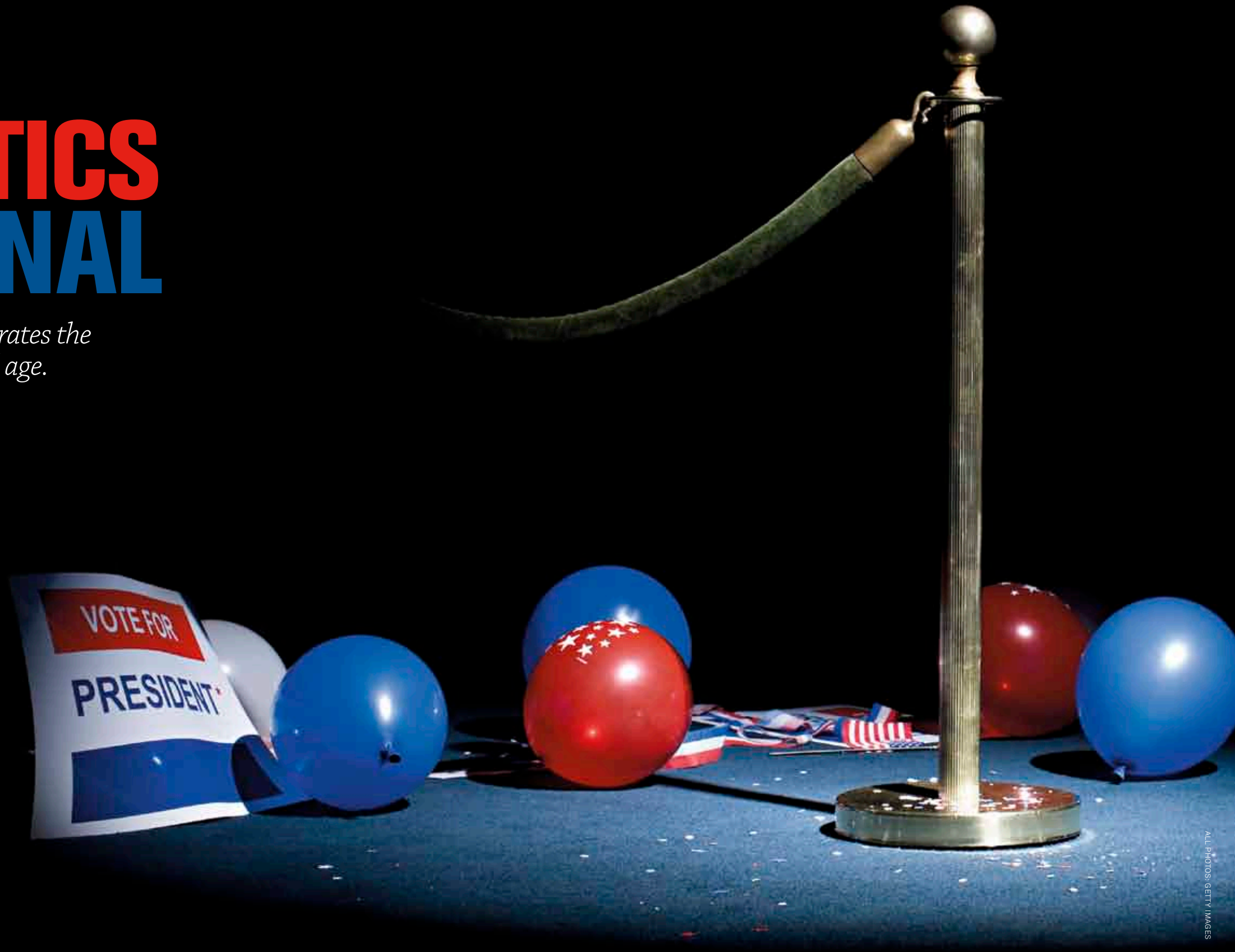
Name of Initiative:
**Patient Protection and
Affordable Care Act 2010
certificate**

Call to Action:
**Donate \$50 or volunteer to
Organizing for America**

Dimensions: **11" x 8.5"**

Details: **Blue print on white
Sundance Felt #80 stock
with silver foil embossing**

Results: **350,000 Obama sup-
porters responded to free
certificate offer. An additional
6,000 responded to \$50 dona-
tion/framed certificate offer.**



During his 2008 presidential campaign, Barack Obama displayed such an impressive grasp of contemporary marketing techniques that pundits coined the phrase “Brand Obama” to describe the Illinois senator’s fundraising prowess. And this year, more than a year after the election, the Obama camp again demonstrated impressive marketing skills — this time creatively tapping mail as part of an integrated push to raise cash for his campaign group, Organizing for America (OFA).

In March, OFA sent e-mails to supporters requesting that they sign a symbolic “Declaration of Support” for President Obama’s health care bill. To thank the approximately 1.1 million supporters who responded to that call to action, OFA followed up with e-mails just three days after the bill’s passage. The e-mails — which featured the line “Where should we send your certificate?” — offered a free, personalized thank-you certificate to supporters who submitted their names as “co-signers” of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Further, supporters who donated \$50 to OFA were offered a framed certificate. The offer, which ended approximately two weeks after its late March implementation, drew hundreds of thousands of responses.

“We wanted to engage folks,” says OFA national press secretary Lynda Tran. “We launched our campaign in June 2009, and since that time, OFA supporters all around the country and in every congressional district have held rallies and public events and done lots of phone banking and canvassing. When the president signed the health care legislation into law, it was an incredible victory for him and for all those supporters. We wanted to make sure that we acknowledged the fact that they played a major role in seeing history happen.”

The offer was designed to promote camaraderie, and its address request presented OFA an opportunity to gather fresh information about supporters. And it is also a reminder of how valued the mail channel remains to the ever-fragmenting media mix: “Brands” that do the best job of maximizing their messages are smart enough to continue their relationship with mail, drawn by its familiarity, palpability and keepsake potential. “People like to have something tangible in their hands,” says Tran. “For something as momentous and historic as health care reform, we felt that people would like to have something they could display.”

According to Tran, approximately 350,000 Obama supporters responded to the certificate offer, with an additional 6,000 responding to the \$50 donation/framed certificate offer.

Improving the message

The certificate campaign also highlights the ever-growing role that marketing plays in the evolution of both political figures and the messages they promote. The president, for instance, has taken a multichannel approach that hasn’t just touched voters, but also won him high praise from the industry as a candidate. In 2008, for instance, a leading advertising trade publication named him its “Marketer of the Year.” “Generally, direct mail was used in the various states to connect people with then-Senator Obama as a candidate,” says Tran. “Direct mail plays a role in all kinds of political campaigns, and certainly played a role in the work that was done in 2008.”

**BRANDS THAT
DO THE BEST
*job of maxi-
mizing their
messages
are smart
enough to
continue the
relationship
with mail.***





Now, as demographics shift and technology continues to reshape how we absorb information, veteran marketers say that their peers are going to have to respond appropriately in some key tactical areas, including design, timing and volume.

Democratic consultant Liz Chadderdon, for one, warns political mail marketers not to rely excessively on text since the words, taken alone, can be seen as clinical and dispassionate. Strong photography and illustrations give your facts impact, she maintains. “You’re trying to creatively grab somebody’s attention about an issue in about 10 seconds, so you have to spend a lot of time being creative,” says Chadderdon. “Pictures help you emotionally connect with the audience.”

Of course, political mail is all about the messaging, so even when marketers do use text, they should be careful to keep the points simple,

even when explaining complex political issues. “We’re big believers that the more words you put in a piece of mail, the less it gets read,” says conservative marketer Randy Kammerdiener.

Which isn’t to say mail doesn’t still offer plenty of room for compelling messaging, others counter. Mail recipients often read pieces at their leisure, which means mail marketers can still pass along more information than generally allowable in many quick-read digital formats. “The more complicated an issue, the more you want to have something on paper that people can read, mull over and digest,” explains Tran.

You’re driving a message, experts remind, so don’t be afraid to touch voters frequently with mail, too. New Jersey marketer Chris Russell recently dropped 10 unique mailers in five weeks. “I don’t think sending more mail will make a voter say, ‘I’m not voting for

this guy,’” Russell says. “I don’t know if there’s a downside to doing more mail.”

Mail’s enduring viability

Politics and mail have long enjoyed a healthy symbiosis. Political mail messages have been around many years, of course, but the 1970s saw an explosion of mail as a tool, largely thanks to marketers who began using private databases to seek out and inundate prospective voters in primary races with fundraising appeals.

With the arrival of sophisticated data collection and analysis techniques, direct mail’s role in U.S. politics shifted into overdrive in 2004. Seeking to maximize direct mail returns, parties took a cue from corporate marketers, investing in pinpoint voter research to locate prospective supporters. Dubbed “micro-targeting,” the process created a new interest in commercial databases. By comparing the exacting consumer info against census data and voter files, political marketing gurus began making educated hunches about voters in select districts. “You may not know if that consumer is a Republican or Democrat, but you know that they subscribe to certain magazines, drive certain vehicle brands and make a certain amount of money a year,” says Democratic consultant Chadderdon. “It was a brand-new ballgame.”

Now, in the digital age, the game has been advanced yet again. Mail is expanding its niche, blending with the Web and other channels to help political groups engage recipients, yield better data and foster more voter appreciation and involvement.

In the OFA certificate campaign, for example, personalized e-mails featured a photo of the 11-inch by 8.5-inch certificate complemented by a note of appreciation: “We’re sending a certificate to every OFA supporter who co-signed health reform with President Obama to say thank you for everything you’ve done. We all fought to make this moment possible, so it’s only fitting that each of us has a piece of history to commemorate this victory. It’s free, even the shipping, and it’s personalized with your name. We just need to know what address to send yours to.”

Like many political direct marketers, Russell views online and social media as powerful emerging technologies that will further integrate with mail, TV, radio and outdoor. “Direct mail will have to adjust to changing times just like everything else, but I think you’re

always going to see it as a major way to communicate with voters,” Russell says. “There’s still a generation alive today — an entire voting bloc — that has no connection to digital in terms of internet and social media.”

But the connection between digital and mail is strengthening. For example, Chadderdon is coordinating a strategy where canvassers use handheld computers to gather info on voters’ views, concerns and political affiliations. Software on the devices is designed to instantly sync to a mail fulfillment center that, through the magic of variable-data printing (VDP), will ship personalized postcards to households within five days of the canvasser’s visit.

Chadderdon believes that, just as the president’s personalized mailers reflect the marketing industry’s embrace of key printing technologies like VDP, other advances will inspire even more creative use of political mail.

“**DIRECT MAIL WILL HAVE TO ADJUST TO changing times just like everything else, but I think you’re always going to see it as a major way to communicate with voters. There’s still a generation alive today — an entire voting bloc — that has no connection to digital.**”

CHRIS RUSSELL,
New Jersey marketer

Generating excitement

Although some may find it difficult to imagine recipients sharing such excitement about political marketing, some pieces have indeed generated thrills and engagement, including the recent presidential certificate. Consider how, even as the notices about the certificate hit e-mail inboxes, targets registered eagerness. On message boards, for example, users posted messages like, “I think I’ll clean a spot on the wall for it.”

Tran says excitement was such after the first e-mail that OFA sent out a second. “It’s a very unique situation, this particular issue. And knowing how fervent our supporters were around health reform, I think the decision was made that it would be fine to resend something like that out.”

Meanwhile, veteran political strategists and marketers on both sides of the ideological aisle agree that, in giving tar-

gets something to hold on to, political mailings like the president’s certificate can be key to engendering long-term interest and loyalty. “People usually are motivated by thanks and praise,” says Kammerdiener. “If the certificate looks like it is officially coming from the president, people are going to be motivated by that.”

Tran agrees and says the clamor for the certificate served up a teachable moment to the White House brain trust about mail messaging and loyalty building: “What did we learn? Well, clearly, it’s something people are interested in receiving.” **A**



THE *FORMULA* FOR *SUCCESS*

BLINDS.COM
CHANGES ITS
MARKETING
APPROACH AND
ENHANCES ITS
REVENUE STREAM.

THE ESSENTIALS

Target audience:
**200,000 past customers and
free blind swatch requesters**

Method:
**Oversized postcards with
promo codes sent three
times a year**

Measurement:
**An in-house analytics team
analyzes how different groups
respond to the various offers**

Return on investment:
**As much as \$1 million in
annual revenue**

BY VICKI POWERS | PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN ROBINSON

For many in the drapery industry, the final curtain began to fall not long after the U.S. housing crisis erupted in 2006. As new home sales declined, companies that had thrived for years selling shades and other drapery products to newly minted homeowners were forced to watch helplessly as revenues dried up and customers went away.

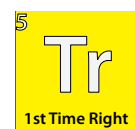
But at Blinds.com, one of the nation's leading online drapery retailers, company officials continued looking for ways to turn the crisis into a window of opportunity. In an effort to win over new customers, the company rolled out new products, explored new ad channels and even employed a series of new marketing techniques, like posting dry-cleaning hangers on doors.

three times a year, marketing sends oversized postcards to a list of 200,000 previous customers and those who ordered a free blind swatch. The mailing style is similar each send, including a proven combination of elements, but with different offers. Each message focuses on a different theme: "limited time," "save money" and "great offers."

The challenge is ensuring the conversion rate actually rises. Cotlar says those who order a free sample convert to sales 40 percent of the time. As a result, he tries to make sure they're offered products that they might not buy otherwise. "It's such a prime group that you don't want to just add costs and give them a new offer in direct mail for a product that they were going to buy without the offer anyway," he states.

Since its marketing was overhauled, the \$50-million company has seen profits skyrocket and has rediscovered some of its best customers.

But the results weren't what the Houston company was seeking. After one particular \$60,000 campaign flopped two years ago, company officials decided to recalibrate their marketing efforts.



CHANGING COURSE

The overhaul began in 2008, when Blinds.com dumped its old lists and began using different databases for customer acquisition. Although the company relied on mail in the past, Blinds.com executives decided to get more aggressive and smarter.

"When you have a small business, every cent counts as far as your marketing spend," says Esther Steinfeld, public relations manager. "Direct mail is something we can always count on to bring in revenue and be profitable."

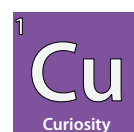
Also key to the company's recalibrated efforts was an expansion of its target audience. Research showed that the company didn't have to depend on new customers as much as previously believed. Working from new mailing lists, the company found that the list that worked best was actually made up of customers who had requested a free blind sample or e-mail newsletter. Past customers were easier to reach than new ones, the company found.

"There was a premise internally that there is a (limited) amount of retention-type mailing you can do when mailing to your own customer base," says Daniel Cotlar, Blinds.com CMO. "How many times are [customers who have already made a purchase] going to keep buying? But that was the one sale that worked well."

Blinds.com also began its current practice of sending different cards to various audiences on a rolling basis to see how they respond. Thus,

Promo codes help the organization track purchases from direct mail. All postcards feature copy that encourages recipients to "use these yourself or give them to a friend."

The overhauled marketing efforts are proving successful. The company, which started in 1994, saw its profits rise by 17 percent this year. And company estimates suggest that the marketing campaign has generated as much as \$1 million in revenue annually. As even further proof of the power of the reworked marketing plan, the American Marketing Association named Blinds.com its AMA Houston Marketer of the Year in 2009.



EXPERIMENTING AS A WAY OF LIFE

Blinds.com's marketing metamorphosis is in keeping with the company's values. When CEO Jay Steinfeld started the company 16 years ago, he preached three central tenets to employees: Experiment with new ideas, don't be afraid to fail and continue to improve.

Not only do these ideas infuse the company's marketing strategy, they're also painted on the walls of its new office complex, where the company moved after spending nine years in offices above a sandwich shop.

The staff — which has grown from 29 to 110 in the past five years — seems more than happy to embrace Steinfeld's edicts. Cotlar says the staff's willingness to take chances compels the company to continually adjust its messages to customers. "Without the tweaks, we'd certainly see a decline in the profitability of a list," he says.

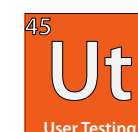


Blinds.com has its own analytics team to see which segments of its lists do better and how people respond to various offers. The organization tests each mailing with several different cards. The piece with the best response carries over to the next mailing for a different test.

"With custom in-house analytics, we're able to dig down deeper and refer back to data more easily than we would if we were relying on a third party," says Abraham Israel, analytics manager at Blinds.com. "We've been able to maximize our spend by taking a deeper dive into the analytics."

The deep dive helps save money by eliminating people who won't convert and grow revenue by providing a deeper understanding of customers, which enables the company to reach further in the list and tune its message more accurately. The deep dive also improves the company's chances of winning over a customer who might not be as profitable otherwise.

"We felt a lot of pressure to really work on profitability of things like direct mail," Cotlar says. "And it was everything: Tighten down, find ways to work more efficiently and spend less but achieve the same results or better. And that's helped us now when things are starting to pick up."




THE SCIENCE BEHIND MARKETING

The "experimentation" theme carries over in other ways, too. The marketers at Blinds.com have dubbed themselves "The Idea Laboratory" — occasionally sporting white lab coats and

posting a "Periodic Table of Marketing Elements" on one wall. "Our experiments don't involve test tubes and beakers, but we do experiments all the time," says Steinfeld. "We're also very analytical, so when things don't work you can quickly tell."

Even playful items like the periodic table help Blinds.com marketing experts. The variety of elements on the chart — such as direct mail, viral marketing and CEO letter — help define more clearly certain business goals, such as attracting prospects, converting them into customers, securing customer feedback and wowing customers enough to get them to spread the word about Blinds.com.

The company is still waiting for more new homeowners to return amid an improving economy, but Cotlar feels its mail marketing endeavors have given the business an edge by enabling it to craft more engaging, relevant offers and to better understand the potential of existing customers as a source of new revenue. Like any good experiment, the Blinds.com marketing overhaul has the company now thinking of what else could be.

"With the success we've had, we know now what's possible with mail," Cotlar says. 

Looking for ways to keep your customers coming back? Download our "Build Repeat Business" white paper at delivermagazine.com/strategy

GRAPHIC DISPLAYS

DESIGN FIRM **STRUCTURAL GRAPHICS**
MAKES DIRECT MAIL COME TO LIFE.

IT all started with children's pop-up books. When the founder of commercial print company Structural Graphics decided to launch the firm in 1976, he began with the idea of bringing to printed marketing materials the same whimsy, joy and excitement he found in the pop-up books he cherished as a child.

Since then, ownership of Structural Graphics has changed hands, but the idea behind the company continues to endure — and flourish. Now, 35 years after its founding, Structural Graphics has established itself as one of the edgiest and most coveted shops in the industry, its dynamic mailers, brochures and other pieces extending the range of traditional communications in ways previously unimagined.

Michael Dambra, vice president, Creative Services, explains the company's forte simply: "We can demonstrate the message rather than just describe it."

And the company often demonstrates those marketing messages through a dazzling array of mailers. They've produced

printed replicas of cars, complete with working wheels and revving engines. They've fashioned postcards that flash digital messages. And, of course, they've got plenty of pop-ups.

Magazine fans might also remember another big piece they worked on, back in 2008: That's when the company was tapped by one globally acclaimed men's fashion magazine to put together a 75th anniversary issue. The cover of the issue, which informed readers that "The 21st Century Begins Now," included a special flexible electronic "paper" that sent images and words flashing across the magazine cover, a la a computer monitor.

LEVERAGING ENGAGEMENT

The company, which has won numerous awards for its work, currently employs 550 people domestically and offshore, including a fully staffed creative services department that does its paper engineering. Based in Essex, Conn., Structural continues to expand: It has offices around the country, including New York City, Los Angeles, Dallas and Boston. There is also a plant in Mexico, where its pieces are assembled.

Left to right: Dimensional pigeons mailed in corrugated boxes with air holes; a "rolling" piece that replicates a product in full dimension; working a comp.





Clockwise from top: A dimensional piece mimics the damage that could result from an accident; preparing a proof; departments collaborate on creative.



Clockwise from top: Prototype of a proposed marketing solution; the hustle and bustle of the creative department; electronic “paper” sends a message.

“WE HAVE A 90-PERCENT REPEAT CUSTOMER BASE BECAUSE USING DIMENSIONAL MEDIA IN AN INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN JUST WORKS. IT STANDS APART FROM ANYTHING ELSE IN THE MAILBOX.”

— ETHAN GOLLER, CO-OWNER

But despite its growth, Structural co-owner Ethan Goller says the company stays true to the tradition laid out by its founder: “He recognized that if you could leverage the engaging and, in some cases, whimsical nature of pop-ups in advertising, it would have a higher propensity to perform.”

Since then, the company, whose biggest clients include major brands in the automotive, financial services and consumer packaged goods industries, has taken out nearly 50 patents on its paper structures and stores more than 40,000 designs in its database. Structural produces about 1,300 different designs in a year, each ranging in volume from hundreds of pieces to millions.

Goller says the company invests so heavily in dimensional mail because of its ability to pull high response rates and to essentially pay for itself via its potential for a significant return on investment. “Being able to leverage a dimensional piece to break through the clutter of what we typically receive via direct mail has a much higher propensity to garner a response

and deliver a greater ROI on a campaign,” says Goller, who, along with CEO Mike Maguire, acquired the company in 1999. “We have a 90-percent repeat customer base because using dimensional media in an integrated campaign just works. It stands apart from anything else in the mailbox.”

And it has drawn the attention of notable corporate marketers. For instance, information services company Experian recently turned to Structural Graphics for help with a new product launch, hoping to break away from its standard direct marketing approaches. For years, the company had been including promotional giveaways aimed at C-level executives.

“The small tchotchkes weren’t capturing the attention of executives,” concedes Karen Huang, marketing communications manager at Experian. “And we thought that something more three-dimensional and interesting would.”

Experian brought in Structural Graphics as it was preparing to launch Income Insight, which provides credit card companies with information to address a new law that requires



these firms consider a consumer's ability to pay when setting credit card limits. Built around the tagline "A borrower's ability to pay should not catch you by surprise," the resulting mailer depicted three different types of consumers with a question attached to each about that person's ability to pay off debt. When pulled out, a tab next to each picture provided more information about each person's financial situation. The flat, rectangular piece could also be opened to display a pop-up cube featuring additional messaging.

"The piece was very dynamic and told a very clear story," says Samantha Haugh, senior marketing communications manager at Experian. In addition, the format with the pull-tabs and the pop up cube tied in well with the tagline and

the overall message of the piece, says Haugh. "The format allowed us to address the pain point of our customers and communicate what these businesses want to know."

MIXING MEDIA, SHIFTING STRATEGIES

In explaining why they recommend mail to most clients, Structural Graphics officials contend that its disruptive potential makes the channel ideal for marketers looking to introduce their brand to new audiences or reach high-value targets who are often pressed for time and/or inundated with other messages. And at a time when budget-crunched brands can ill afford to miss the mark, mail, Goller



From top: The company's website gets an update; a look inside the Essex warehouse; this piece's cube design offers both impact and longevity.



"A KEY STRATEGY FOR TODAY'S MARKETERS IS CREATING AN INVITED DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE MARKETER AND THEIR TARGET IN A WAY THAT DELIVERS RELEVANT CONTENT TO THE TARGET. WE ARE CONTINUING TO BUILD A BRIDGE BETWEEN DIMENSIONAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA."

— ETHAN GOLLER, CO-OWNER

argues, is a pretty safe bet. "Engaging marketing done through an integrated campaign, with multiple touch points and dimensional media, tends to be a very effective opening statement for marketers," Goller says.

For instance, when agriculture and turf equipment manufacturer John Deere sought out new ways to engage potential customers, Structural Graphics came up with a mini-replica of a new John Deere tractor model. Several thousand pieces of the mailer were created and mailed to the media in the farm equipment space.

In many instances, he says, his company suggests using dimensional mail to capture a target audience's attention and drive recipients online with a personalized URL. "A key strategy for today's marketers is creating an invited dialogue between the marketer and their target in a way that delivers relevant content to the target," explains Goller, adding that this is also why web development is a growing area of Structural Graphics' business today. "We are continuing to build a bridge between dimensional and digital media."

Of course, the company remains firmly moored in direct mail and has been steadily plumbing the depths of its power. Today, direct mail comprises 80 percent of Structural Graphics' volume. Direct mail customers include companies in the financial services, insurance, automotive, and travel and entertainment sectors, among others. Its biggest sector is pharmaceutical. Earlier this year, Structural Graphics launched a wholly owned subsidiary, MedTera, dedicated to creating integrated marketing programs for the pharmaceutical industry.

Meanwhile, advancements in print manufacturing and workflow technology are enabling companies like Structural Graphics, much of whose work is hand assembled, to better meet tight deadlines and trim costs. Additionally, the company, whose creations can take anywhere from two and a half weeks up to several months to develop, recently introduced a new line of dimensional mailers that can be ready to mail in as little as six days and, because they are created via an automated manufacturing process and ordered online, cost less than other Structural pieces.

But along with the technological changes, Goller says, have come strategic shifts among

many marketers that are creating new inroads for mail marketers. "The thinking has changed from everything being about response rates to understanding the need to deliver a measurable return on investment," he says. As a result, marketers are more apt to consider marketing tools such as elaborate dimensional mail, especially when targeting high-value prospects, because of the ROI potential.


Iggesund Paperboard, which makes a brand of exceptionally durable paper stock called Invercote, decided to use a Structural Graphics mailer that features four panels turned in succession to reveal a series of images. They chose the mailer because its design demands a paper stock that not only provides durability, but crack-free folds as well. Naturally, the mailer was made from Invercote. "Even if there were no copy on the direct mailer, you could see the uncanny strength, durability and cracking resistance of Invercote," explains Iggesund North American sales manager Neal Haussel.

POPPING UP IN NEW PLACES

In addition to working in direct mail, Structural Graphics is expanding to become more of a marketing services provider. This growth has included such recent developments as adding expertise in list segmentation, campaign tracking and data refining. The company has also built up its in-house graphic design and animation departments.

The expansion has meant opening up new geographic territories as well. In 2006, Structural Graphics acquired what was then one of their competitors in dimensional marketing, Los Angeles-based Intervisual Communications, giving it a presence on the West Coast.

Going forward, Structural Graphics will continue to round out its offerings, says Goller. "I don't believe you can deliver a piece in isolation; you have to understand the holistic view of the campaign to deliver a superior ROI," he says.

But that also means his company will keep pushing the boundaries of its core competency, high-impact mail. Concludes Goller: "In a world where costs are increasing and advertisers are looking for ways to deliver the least expensive but most effective ROI, dimensional mail is a winner." 

CAN YOU *make* CHANGE?

Revitalize your marketing by considering adjustments in **FIVE** key areas.

P.C. (Pat) McGrew, EDP, is the Data-driven Communication Evangelist in the Business to Business Solutions Group at Eastman Kodak Company. She works worldwide to support the needs of those involved in data-driven customer communication. With more than 25 years in the information-delivery industry, she has performed in a variety of capacities, most recently specializing in strategic marketing planning.

There comes a time in every business when the marketing campaigns that have worked reliably month after month begin to return disappointing results. You can't put your finger on what is different, but clearly your customers and prospects are responding in smaller numbers. In fact, you may have noticed that your customers are churning at a higher rate, spending less and contacting the call center more often. If any of this sounds familiar, there are some steps you should consider that could help your messaging ring louder with targets.

BY PAT MCGREW | ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANDREW BANNECKER



1. REDESIGN

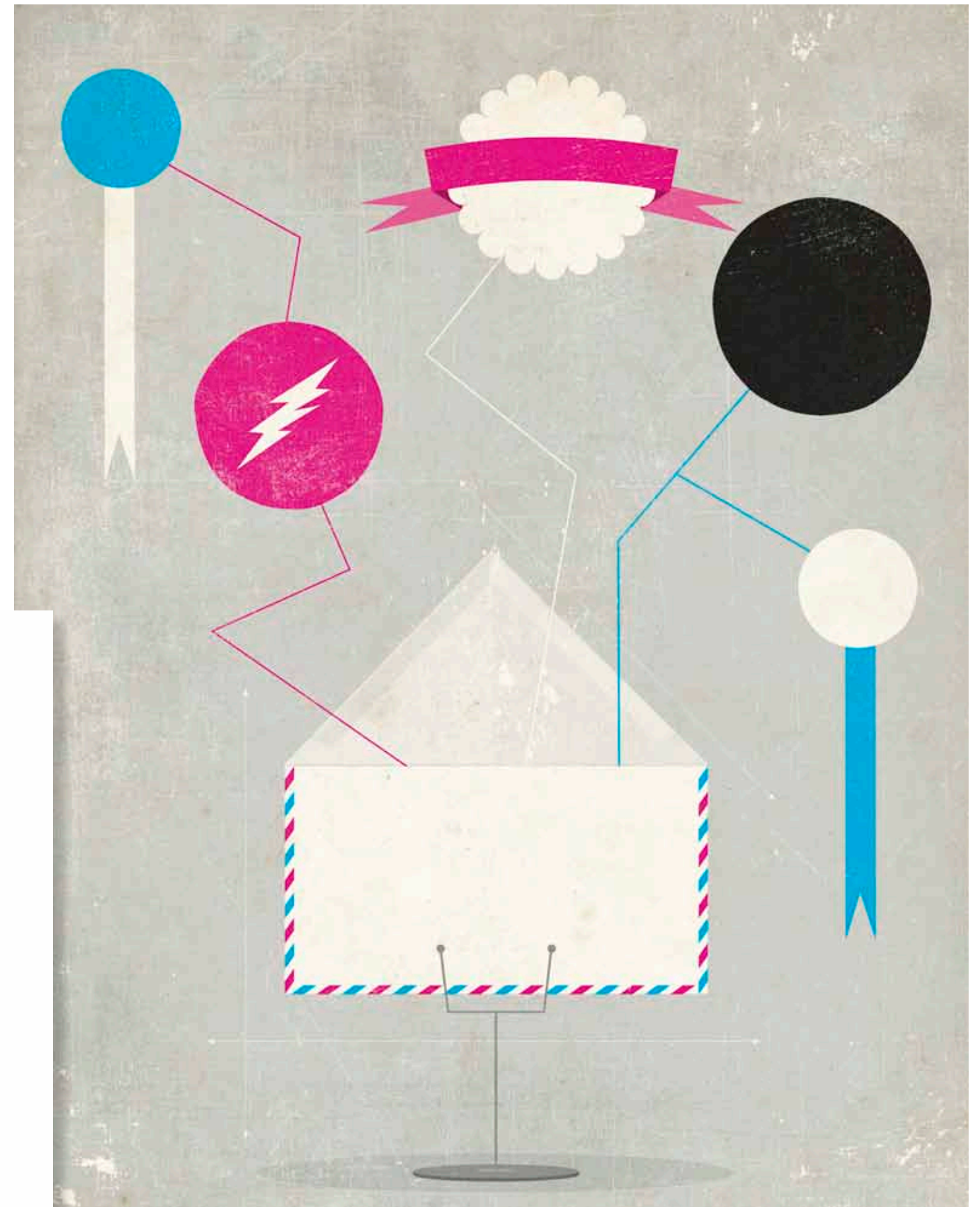
Every form of customer communication says something about your company and your brand. Companies that send bills, statements or even packing slips rarely include these types of customer communications in the same strategy that covers their direct mail, mass media and web campaigns — and that is a mistake.

Treat all communications with the same care, imagination and meticulousness that mark your direct marketing efforts.

Your customers should always be able to relate any mailing you send to the messages and images they read and see in your other communications channels. Design is one of the best ways to build bridges between your mailings, your website and any other outlets you utilize.

Now, even as most companies that issue bills and statements are redesigning to meet regulatory changes, is the perfect time to redesign everything from bills and statements to those normally staid regulatory notices. Review them for use of the logo, inclusion of marketing taglines and overall adherence to the corporate style guide.

Remember that small changes count. Alter your logo placement. Change where your main message appears. Brighten the graphics. These changes will catch the eye of your customer.



2. INFORMATION

An effective tactic, particularly for brands that engage in monthly conversations with consumers, is to enhance dialogue by adding information. If you can add information content where you have not included it in the past, you are adding incremental value to that conversation.

Maybe you're asking, "What information can I add?" Maybe you think that your brand, product or service is so well understood in your market that there is just nothing you can add. Or maybe you believe that your situation is too complicated.

Take a step back and think about what you would say to a new employee or your next-door neighbor about the products and services your company offers. Now consider having that same exchange with consumers. Billers around the world have found ways to add information about recycling programs, market trends and even community events to their monthly bills. Need more inspiration? Check with the team that runs the call center. What are people asking? Can you preempt the calls? Odds are you can reduce the number of calls by answering the most common questions on the monthly bill.



4. CROSS PROMOTION

Marketing budgets are tight, so it's time to start thinking across party lines. Bills and statements, as well as regulatory notices and other communication, should be used to promote as many of your products and services as possible. It's especially important to do a bit of data mining to see what products and services each customer uses — and, critically, what they could use that they currently don't.

The truth about adding these marketing messages is that they will be competing with all of the other marketing messages coming at them. I recall one master marketer, more than 10 years ago, explaining to a business magazine that an average consumer would see a million marketing messages that year — and this was before the digital explosion and the increase in product placement in films and on TV.

The fragmentation of media only increases the burden on smart companies to avoid marketing a product or service to someone who already has it. It happens in my mailbox almost every day — and it makes me less interested in doing business with those organizations. But those that market to me as if they know me tend to hold my attention for a longer time, which turns into revenue for those companies.

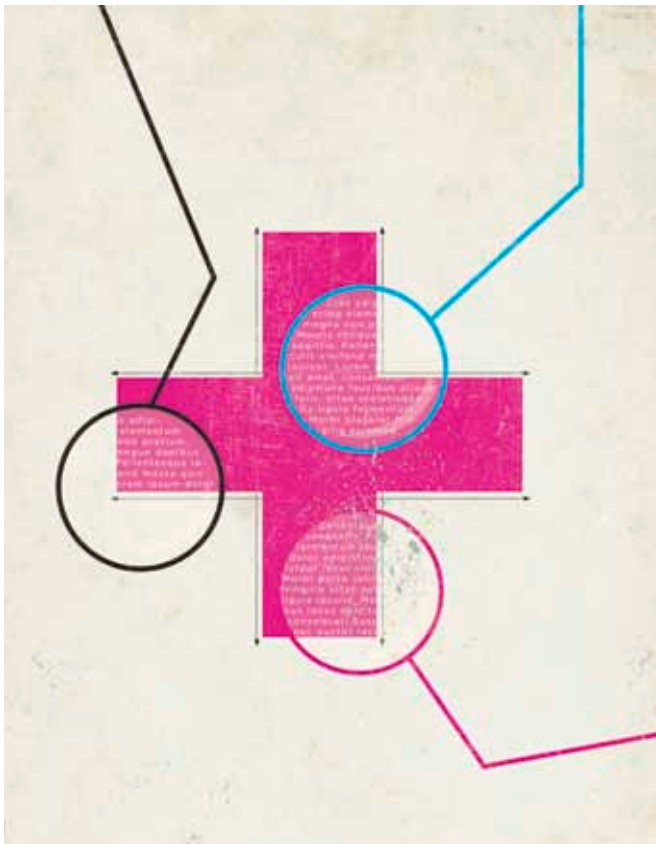
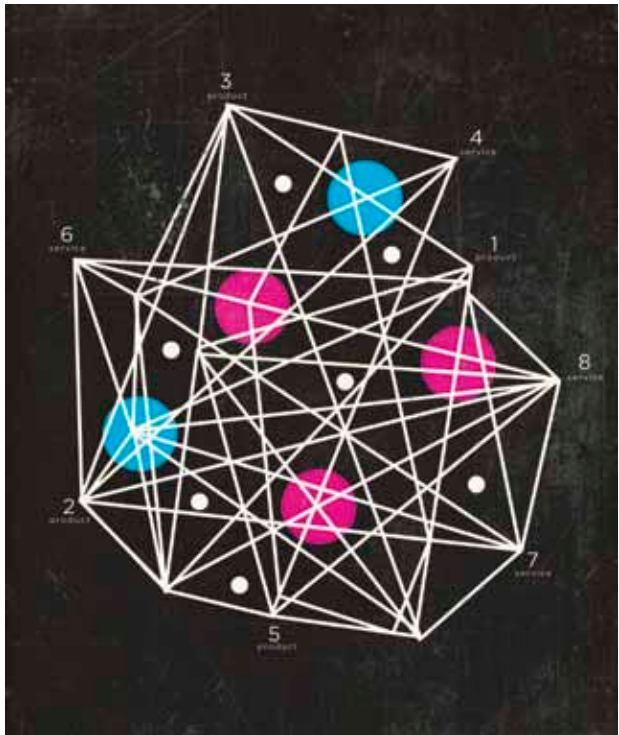
3. TARGETED EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Every bill, statement, notice or amendment to terms provides an opportunity to create a more educated consumer: someone who recognizes the value of a relationship with a biller — or any company — that keeps him or her informed.

Consider investing in customized content relevant to particular aspects of a customer's profile. Start by mining information from demographics, psychographics, spending patterns and payment matter — targeted content that isn't focused on selling but rather on engaging consumers' personal interests.

Include static text content or dynamic content to add value. Ever see those utility bills with charts that graph the monthly bill against the ambient temperature? Imagine how much more valuable that info could be were it localized, offering charts graphing against, say, neighborhood averages and usage rates.

Build a library of valuable, relevant content. Use it to identify a range of triggers that let you include specific pieces of content with every outbound bill or statement. Over time, the education libraries and scripts expand and the range of topics covered grows more diverse.



5. REENGAGE

Reexamine your customer care strategy. Which of your customers are most likely to leave? Which are most likely to respond to promotions? The promise of Customer Relationship Management was that companies would get to know their customers better and use that information to develop a 360-degree view of the consumer.

The truth is that most companies' knowledge of the customer extends no further than whatever information is in the companies' databases — and that information is often limited to only the most basic demographics. In the Information Age, there's no better time than now to consider deepening that database by acquiring more external information about your customers.

After some research, you may discover that many of your customers have common characteristics that you are not speaking to. Look at your own wallet to get an idea of the opportunity: If you have several accounts — credit, bank, insurance — you have customer profiles with each. Do you look the same to each of those organizations?

The goal of marketing is to grow both market share and customer wallet share. We know that personalized communication using a combination of good information architecture, good design and appropriate use of color forms the baseline for a customer communication strategy. What's in your strategy?

E-mail Pat McGrew at Pat.McGrew@kodak.com, follow her on Twitter @PatMcGrew and read her blog at patmcgrew.growyourbiz.kodak.com.



WHAT KODAK DID

A sports-themed mailer shows how the company takes its own advice.

The Kodak Play Ball Campaign offered a chance to win a trip to the pro baseball championship in exchange for registering at a landing page designed to collect survey information from respondents. It also gives us a chance to show what the company did in the five key areas I outline.

- 1) Design/Redesign:** The variable design promoted the baseball theme by incorporating one of 28 great stadium images with the Kodak brand elements and logo. Respondents received an image of the baseball stadium closest to their geographic location.

2) Product Information: The mailer included the value proposition for the KODAK NEXPRESS and KODAK DIRECTPRESS Solutions for a specific vertical market, such as education or health care, based on the recipient's area of interest.

3) Targeted Educational Content: The lead focused on a topic based on the vertical market. For the education market, for example, the copy emphasized that educational institutions face competition in recruitment as well as budget pressures that require any print solution to come with a solid ROI. The
- content focused on opening the door to data-driven communication using digital solutions from Kodak.

4) Cross Promotion: The mailer spotlights two solutions, but also identifies other services from Kodak, including business evaluation, business development and training services.

5) Customer Care Strategy: Woven through the narrative is the concept of Kodak as the best partner to help grow your business. The concept of partnership is the lead on the website landing page and continues in the messaging of a follow-up reminder e-mail for those who do not immediately respond. The results? Closed more than \$5 million in revenue and added more than 500 leads to the database while opening the door for opportunities for other KODAK Solutions, including workflow and proofing. — Pat McGrew

Every marketer wishes he or she could predict the success of a campaign before its launch. Well, what better way to divine the destiny of your marketing plan than by using an old-fashioned fortune-telling cootie catcher as your guide? (Research and data analysis, you say? Well, sure, if you want to get technical about it — but that's not much fun.)

To help, we've provided a cootie catcher of our own just for you. All you have to do is fold it according to the directions provided and soon you'll be forecasting your marketing success with all the accuracy you'd expect from a simple origami space filler. Just be sure to use your newfound powers for good, not evil.

HOW TO FOLD:

<p>Fold each corner to the opposite corner. open paper up. You should have creases in your paper that look like this.</p> <p>Artwork face down</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Fold all corners to the center of the paper.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Now your paper should look like this.</p> <p>3</p>
<p>Now turn your paper over so the folds you just made are face down.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Just like in step 2. Fold all corners to the center of the paper.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Your paper should now look something like this.</p> <p>6</p>
<p>Now fold your paper in half vertically and horizontally.</p> <p>7</p>	<p>Insert your fingers underneath the tabs.</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Finished Product.</p> <p>9</p>

HOW TO PLAY:

- 1) Find a colleague and ask him or her to pick an object on one of the top flaps.
- 2) Moving the flaps in and out and side to side in time with the letters, spell out that object's name.
- 3) Stop on the last letter with the cootie catcher open to reveal the numbers, and ask your colleague to pick one. Count out the number by moving the flaps in and out and side to side. Ask him or her to pick another number and count it out in the same manner.
- 4) This time ask your colleague to pick a third number. Open that flap to reveal the marketing fortune inside.

